

genesis
the literary & art magazine of IUPUI
spring 2016



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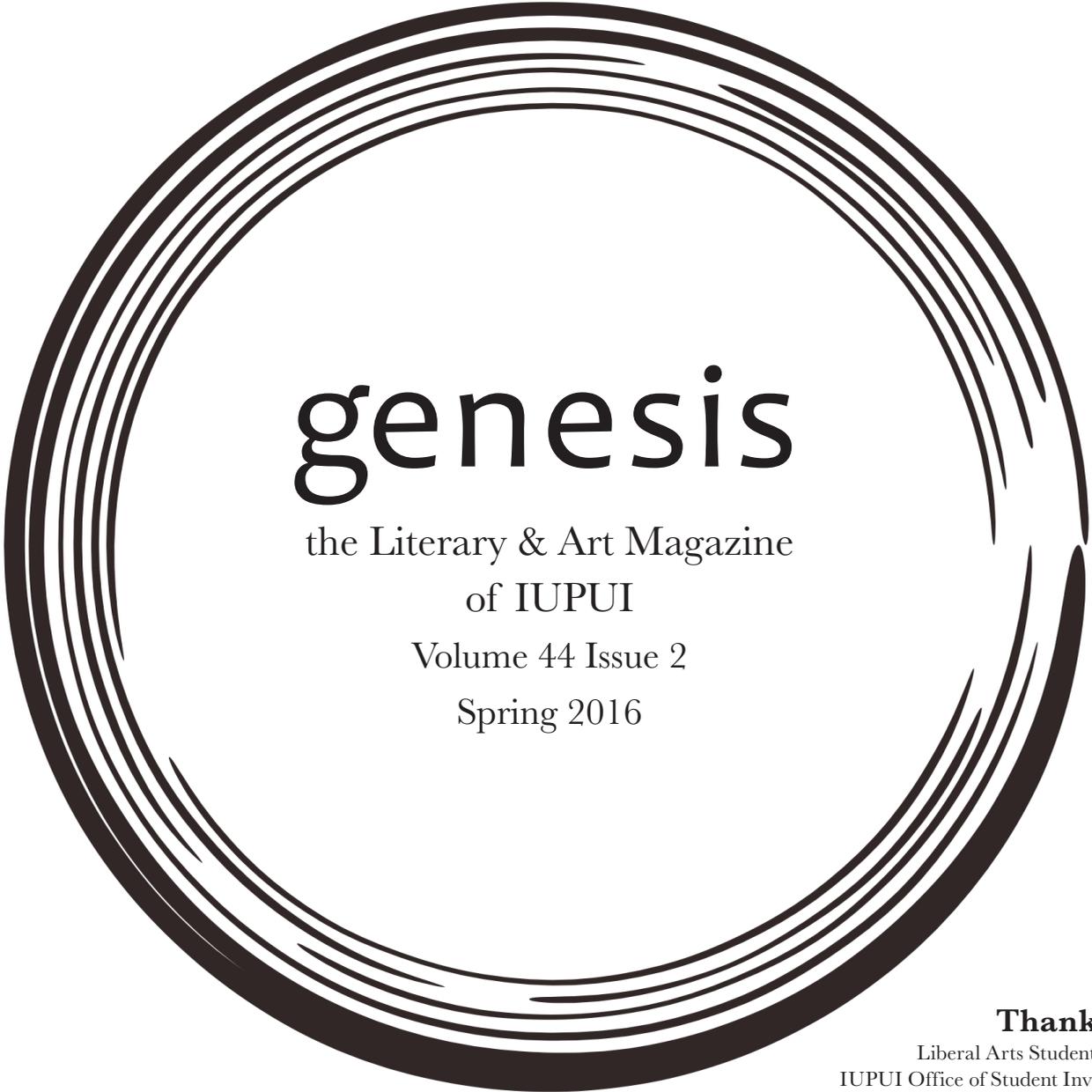
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Managing Editors' Note

Reader,

We're astounded every semester by students' willingness to take up the most complicated parts of life in their work, and even more so by their sheer creativity. Week after week we receive work that challenges our ideas about what makes art worth our time, about whether what's worth *our* time is also worth *your* time, and about how to trace the lines between intention and expression. You'll find only some of the work that stretched us this spring on the following pages. Many pieces that didn't make it into the issue were vitally important in selecting what we did. Conversations on pieces that narrowly missed acceptance taught us invaluable lessons that opened up our minds to welcome in those you are about to read. Because the three of us will be graduating in just a few short weeks, this issue is especially dear to us, but it isn't about us. It's about you, reader. We're so proud to hand this over to you, now. We're leaving the journal in the hands of capable editors who are as committed as we have been to delivering the quirkiest, creepiest, and most profound literary work of IUPUI's students right to your very eyes. We hope you'll follow the lead of these wonderful writers who read deeply and write honestly.

It's been a pleasure,
Caleb, Camille, and Olivia



genesis

the Literary & Art Magazine
of IUPUI

Volume 44 Issue 2

Spring 2016

Thank you:

Liberal Arts Student Council
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Western Publishing
and friends of *genesis*

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Poetry

Sarah Turmail A Butcher and His Family's First
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Sarah Turmail

Lucy, I'm Home

Pal, I need to weep. The rubble of my life
is naked, catching cold under the woodpile
while I pair socks, fuss with my eyebrows.
Disillusioned with botched handwriting,
an epitaph I thought of just now.

You lay on the warped linoleum,
and the curve of your hip as you hide
your penis from me hangs a crescent moon
in the kitchen. The dog's run off, pal,
because you left the door open, again.

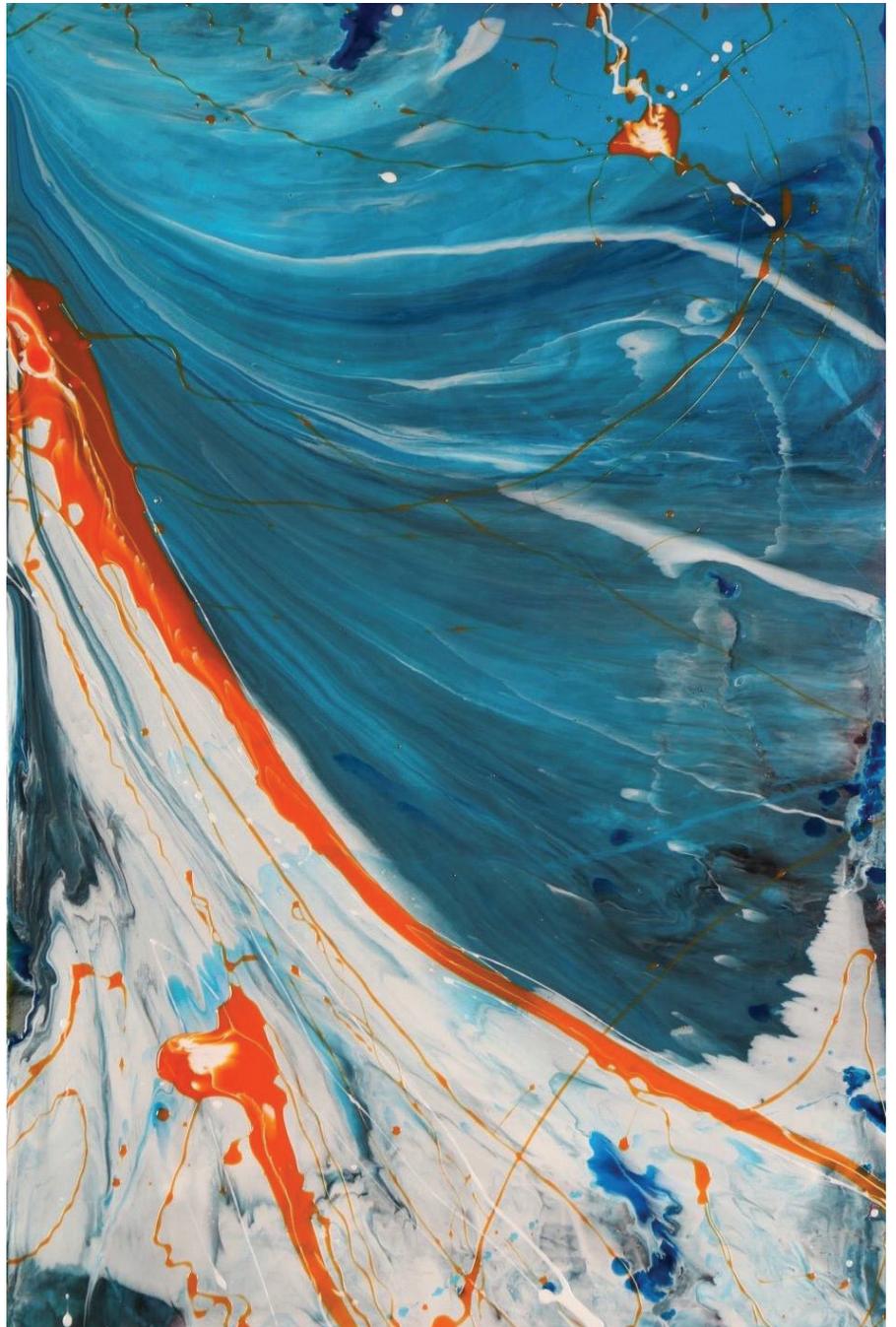
Whiskey drips off the window sill—
tears meant for the dog hair dusted
on the baseboards. The smell echoes
from his mouth, bouncing from the yellowed
cavern to the winded light of dinnertime.

He is Babylon, collapsed after a seven
lapped walk, and if I fold enough socks,
find the right brow pencil, I can forget
that I ever loved whiskey breath and bad teeth.
Pal, I'm leaving, now, to look for the dog.

Aaron Dodd

Pools I

Acrylic
24x36"



Carolina Castoreno

Recuerdos

Recuerdos means memories in Spanish, and in this context refers to the items placed on the altar of loved ones who have passed for Dia de Los Muertos, the Day of the Dead.

Concord grapes fresh off the vine.
Well, not really,
store bought from the overpriced
supermarket on 86th street. I never knew
they were called Concords.
I called them *Wela's* grapes,
but they still burst with the same sour
explosion as my tongue effortlessly
splits the velvety purple peel.
I hated all other grapes that didn't
taste like *Wela's* tart little spheres.

A dinted tin of Royal Dansk
butter cookies,
no *galletas* inside of course.
I'd rush to pry off the lid only to
find it stuffed to the brim
with buttons, needles, and thimbles-
both rubber and metal
and spools of every colored-thread.
The fibers of all my Virgin Mary robes
for every nativity play
and Dia de Guadalupe.

A cup of cream and sugar with a splash
of coffee.

Another *café* black and bitter
both spiced with sprigs of cinnamon.
I used to take it sweet like hers
the *leche* coating my chocolate *concha*
toasted beige, like my chubby fingers.
Now I drink it dark and strong like his.
Long ago swallowing my hope
and tolerance for humanity.
Roasted cynicism, stoic brew.

A red bandana with black and white paisleys,
twisted tear drops
infusing the room with the aroma of baby oil
and Vicks vapor rub, the miracle drug,
partnered with *manzanilla* tea and
eggs for *ojo*, a couple *sana sana*'s and
you could cure cancer. *Welo* kept it
tucked in the pocket of his khakis or
sometimes his flannel shirt, always the *cholo*,
even at 76, even when the diabetes took
his legs, *siempre cabrón!*

All the *recuerdos de mis abuelos* nestled on the lap of
a Mexican blanket.

Not a big San Marcos *Colcha*, a little woolen
rainbow-colored *serape* we used to drape
over *Welo's* chair, the kind gringos call “throws.”

A fat cobalt blue candle that smells like
the beach replacing *veladoras de los santos*.

Sorry *Wela*, the *Virgencita* doesn't
visit my house much these days.

I burn the sage and wonder, why
can't all grapes taste like *Wela's*?

Laila Naseeb

AnGel

Gel Pen on Paper

8x11"



Carie McMichael

That Metaphor Bullshit

All my classmates write important things
to their ex-best friend, Jesus; they all seem
deep and important, their nibs all too coagulated
with ink to actually say what they're talking about,
as if something inside ourselves is too horrific to digest,
so we coat it in waxy ambergris, terribly poignant,
hyper-extended metaphor, something like,
"I am a square peg in a round hole,"

when what you really mean is

I LOVE THE SENSATION OF ANAL INTERCOURSE
AND AS A MAN, I QUESTION WHAT THAT MEANS
FOR MY SEXUALITY, OR DARE I SAY,
WHAT WILL MY MOM THINK?

You write about her eyes as if they were the most intricate star scape, when what you really mean is
THERE ARE NO WORDS
to explain the observable destiny nestled in the spidery spokes of her irises.
You have to love her first, then see it for yourself.
You write about the sound of your heartbeat resounding loudest in your skull when what you really mean is
YOU ARE TERRIFIED OF BEING ALONE WITH YOURSELF.
Perhaps the solid tangle of copper wire is not spool-able, which is what I scribble casually in some hollow margin when what I really mean is
I AM TOO TONGUE-TIED, MY BRAIN IS TOO FRIED
to eloquently convey my fractured being.

So it is ironic, I think, that because poets cannot find the words, they browse garage sales and flea markets for other words to staple together in hope that someone will understand the parts of themselves that need shading in.
You can't describe Paris until you see it.
You can't describe a heartbeat until you feel it, but that never stopped anyone with a pencil and something to write on.

Kelsey Blacklock
Open/Closed

Oil on Canvas
22x30"



Mercedez Schaefer

Hello? God, It's Me, Mercedez

When my dog is sick, I regret not being closer to Jesus. The way I see it, there's starvation, homelessness, disease, terrorism, and genocide all over the world, so you have to be pretty damned tight with Jesus if you want help when your dog takes a turn for the worse. In high school, a fifteen-year-old kid who walked the halls with me every day went to bed and never woke up. They said an aneurysm. He was a healthy weight, active, no prior heart-related issues. His heart, a year younger than my own, exploded without warning. And if that kind of thing happens, how does Ruger, all ninety-eight pounds of American Bulldog, with his dizzy spells and head tremors, stand a chance?

It's October 2004. A few friends invite me to *A Trip to Hell*, my hometown's alternative to a haunted house. Sarah's mom drops us off. We wait in line. There's hot chocolate, popcorn, and caramel apples. When our group gains the front of the line, a grim reaper ushers us onto a dirt path surrounded by tall trees about a hundred yards or so into the wood line. The first scene is a deadly car crash – teenagers sprawled lifeless, covered in dried, flaking artificial blood. The scene is without sound. The driver, recognizable because he still inhabits the battered driver's side, stirs. He wakes; he takes in the scene; he shakes his lifeless girlfriend, her bloodied head now one with the windshield; he screams. When he stumbles out the driver's side, he runs from friend to friend until it becomes clear that he's the sole survivor. If the dead bodies of his closest friends aren't enough, his guilt steals his breath, brings him to his knees as his eyes fall on the drained bottle of whiskey, thrown from the car unharmed.

We trudge on. Farther back in the woods, a pregnant teenager cries voicelessly. She is alone. She walks into the abortion clinic. The sound of a crude vacuum fills the scene. I shudder; she screams. Is she in pain? Or just overwhelmed by her choice? When she attempts to reconcile with God, He doesn't recognize her. I love you my child, but I no longer know you. You have turned away from me. The grief-stricken divinity casts her lost soul to Hell with the others where it belongs. And we walk on. In a makeshift living room, a working mother dresses for her night

shift at the local hospital. Her young daughter begs her to take the night off. She cannot. They need the money. *Please, stay home, Mommy. Aw honey, don't be ridiculous. I'll be back in time to make you breakfast before school.* She has barely started her car to leave when the stepfather, thus far an inanimate part of the backdrop, crumples his beer can and pulls the small girl violently into the bedroom. Hell on Earth.

As I write this, more than ten years later, other details have become fuzzy. I recall a suicide scene. In my mind, the scene is connected to this girl, this preteen raped in her own home, struggling to tell her mother something she cannot dare let pass her bruised lips. This girl who is without hope. This girl who is empty. This girl who is victim. She attempts to clean what can never come clean, bleach to a blood stain. She takes her own life. But there is no mercy in her act, no release. Our group walks into a mock Hell; this I remember clearly. Hot, suffocating steam blinds me. Fire dances on the walls. Demons screech and wail into the heat, yanking at heavy chains that will never come loose. Among them, the child with child, the girl with nothing but self-disgust and a razor. Reapers claw and shout at us; it is their mission, their sole purpose, to pull every one of us into those flames. We flee.

The trip ends with three doors. *Choice*, a distinguished man upfront bellows. Then, Christ himself walks through our midst, battered and bloody, staggering under the weight of a giant cross. We part quickly, arms tingling, eyes downcast, trying much too hard to swallow. A few of

us check our phones. I suppose there is a lesson in here somewhere. One door is marked Heaven – for the confidently saved. Another has Hell scrawled across the top – for the irrecoverably lost. The last is the ever-popular question mark door. I wonder how many smart ass teenagers have walked spitefully through the Hell door. I admire their defiance as I stumble, dazed, toward the familiar punctuation mark. I pick up a glossy pamphlet, pray with a grey-haired stranger, and arrive early for Sunday's 10 a.m. service at Church on the North Coast. I have since heard that the trip has improved its marketability, adding a school shooting and an Ariel-Castro-like hostage scene. I appreciate the church's attention to current events.

That first Sunday service I recognize my hairdresser sitting three rows from the front. She flaunts a flawless blue-black bob that rests on her contoured cheek. Monday through Friday, and every other Saturday, Jess worked eight-hour shifts in 4-inch black stilettos, carried a \$400 bag, and listened to underground hip-hop. Although I have never seen her place, I bet it's the sort of lofted apartment with white carpets, glass tables and modern artwork adorning the walls – *is that an original Warhol?* She was – still is, I'm sure – delightful. And not just her hair and shoes. On each of the twenty-two days of the month that Jess worked at the salon, she convinced no less than ten clients that they were somehow as fabulous as her. Certainly, they were not. Certainly, I was not. But the light she gave off, the smile, the confidence, the ease, it was legit. And I held

fast to it. I watch her in the third row on that first Sunday, and I get it. She has Jesus. I decide right then that I too will have Jesus.

I had no interest in doing hair. I would write – be artsy in some obscure definition of the word, and Jesus and those stilettos and that white carpet would all be part of my aura. People would think, *that Mercedes, she's got it all figured out*, in the same way that my cousin had once wondered aloud, *how do you party as much as you do and still get straight A's*. I'd never be rich, but I'd be well off (“well off” was about as ambiguous as “artsy”). I'd never be beautiful, but I'd be intriguing. I would never rock a *Honk If You Love Jesus* sticker on my bumper, but I'd hang a cross from the rearview mirror of my spotless Lexus. How I'd get these things was irrelevant; these *things* were merely attached to an idea of myself, an idea that occupied a better part of my young adult years.

At one point, I became consumed with a vague notion of doing third-world humanitarian work. The church helped fund an orphanage in Haiti. I'd be helping poor children, traveling, writing, adding “international experience” to my resume – talk about a grand slam. Perhaps the stilettos and white carpet would be put on hold momentarily, but the path to cosmopolitanism demanded travel – did it not? All the better if I could reach Oz on the road of selflessness. I adored the people I traveled to Haiti with; young, ambitious, thoughtful, and high on Jesus, they all held romantic notions of who they would become. Even better were the Haitians I met: full of energy, life, compassion, and empathy de-

spite extreme poverty and hardship. Before we'd boarded the plane, the group leader had promised each of us that this trip would change our lives forever. He was right.

It's August 2014. My first night in Haiti I write that besides the mysterious climate, Haiti is exactly what I expected. The poverty of the kind you see on CNN. I note the scraggly dogs, ribs protruding, hair matting, nipples dragging the dust. Suddenly, Ruger doesn't seem that bad off. Below that I write, “the dogs distract me from the naked toddler, reddish hair and bulging stomach, tossing himself in the muddied water of a street ditch.” There is a charcoal boy with us, a translator with a wide smile and choppy English. He has no parents. He too grew up in the orphanage. I want to ask him a question, but I don't know which one.

We travel to a nearby village. We hear that it is worse than the others. The villagers are always without enough food, often without drinkable water. We give bread from our truck. Another gift from the white man. At first there is a line; then there is disorder; soon, they pummel each other for precious seconds and thirds. Mothers send their youngest up again and again, knowing we won't turn away those small, bloated bodies. I wonder how long it will be before they eat again. One woman with a naked infant on her hip kicks a toddler repeatedly in his stomach until he releases the soccer ball we've just tossed him. We have turned them into animals. And when our supplies run out, there are still too many hungry mouths. We've failed them, given them nothing

that will last until tomorrow, next month, next year. They chase after our trucks for miles, *Blah Blah gimme un doller*. Our reply is a chorus: *Jezi renmen ou*, Jesus loves you. We brandish our trip with Jesus's name and promptly return to the states to indulge in burgers and fries and report on the great change we've made, the souls we've saved. We sleep soundly with the difference we failed to make. Hallelujah.

As I write this, I've stopped attending organized churches. After Haiti, I asked an elder of the church whether he, whether the church itself (whatever that means), believes that the millions of people who identify with Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Vodoun, etc. will burn in Hell eternally for not calling their God(s), Jesus. He didn't have an answer. It was one of those *our God is a merciful god, but the Book says....* He navigated skillfully around the question as Christians often do. In this Christians closely resemble politicians. I refused to let him off so easily.

"Jesus is love, right? It doesn't seem to me that it matters what we call Him so much as we spread love, don't you think? Seems way too human for God to be so overly concerned with whether we get His name right."

My twenty-four-year-old self, and now my sophisticated quarter-of-a-century self, still cannot make sense of it. Seems so imperialistic. Believe this. Repeat after me. Don't question it. Our way is the right way. Everything else is wrong, inferior. This bread is for you, but only after you say *Jezi renmen ou*. Affiliate your basic needs and your access to those needs with your ability to repeat

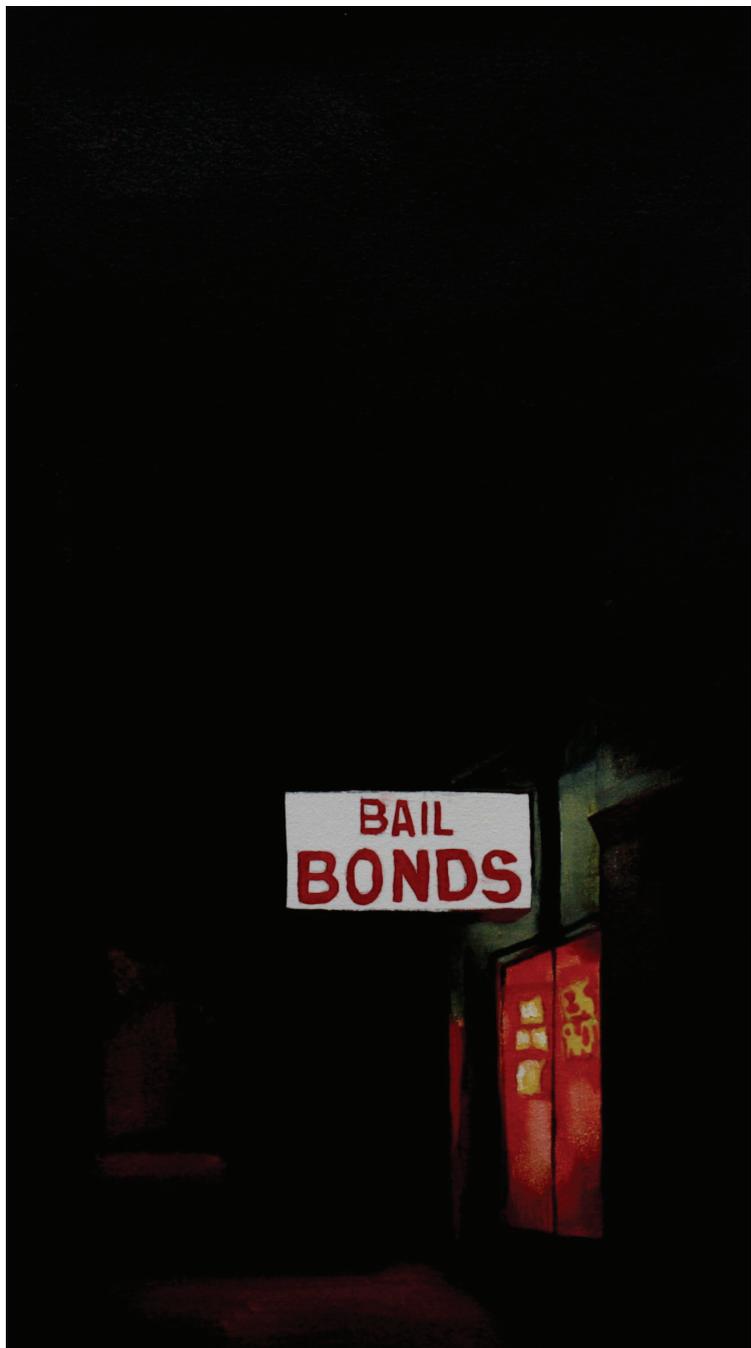
after the white man. Doesn't sound like love to me.

These days I try to write more. I read often. I travel when I can. I own three pairs of black stilettos. My carpet is beige, and my car's market value is well under \$20,000. In an ode to Emily Dickenson, I search for Jesus out in the world, in people, in nature, in words. I direct my prayers to Jesus – old habits die hard I suppose – and I pray daily. Jesus and I laugh at the idea that humans have fucked up love so monstrously, as if it could ever be so conditional. *Call it only this; love only this type of person; change who you are; change everyone else around you*. That can't be right, right? And just when I feel like I'm getting somewhere, like I might be onto something, my dog gets sick. I drop to my knees and hurriedly text my church-going pals: *put in a good word for me*.

Kelsey Blacklock

Bail Bonds

Oil on Paper
6x12"



Sarah Turmail

A Butcher and His Family's First Christmas After Losing a Loved One

Candied syrup bought from the Amish store
and my sister's name spill onto the warped
linoleum: it's the holidays in the holler. Dad
says her blood must be sweeter than this sugary

ham baste, as sinful as she is. Nothing more
than an abomination he banished from his folding
card table. He holds his tin wool under the drip
of the sink, sharpens the butcher knife. Butcher

knives aren't cleavers—times have changed, you
know. They're like any knife pulled from the drawer
of spare Mason jar lids and stained hot pads. Not scary,
but, you know, still different. This knife isn't meant

for kids, not for making PB&J's or Grandma's
afternoon crackers and cheese. They're meant
for work that glorifies God—slitting hog's throats,
shaping cubed steaks and pork chops. So be wary,

kids, he says to the little cousins as he works a knife
they can't tell from a butter spreader. This one will
get you good, not like the other knives, he says.
It's a dirty shame about your sister, can't she find

God, Aunt Sharon sighs to me. I think about telling
her that she did find God, in a field of mustard
weeds and Canadian thistle, high and tripping acid.
Closets are for clothes, and the gays, Jeff says

to my brother. I close my eyes and think of her.
But mostly, I only think of dad's eloquent defense
of a butcher knife. How it lives just fine with the regular
knives in their home amongst the Mason jar lids

and stained hot pads. Aunt Jane just looks at me
and shakes her head. I look to the window, to the bright
dusk, and find the stars that shine above the horizon.
Do you see those stars, I say to Aunt Jane. Stars?

She goes to the window. Nope, can't see, not
with the sun in the way. One day—my sister said
to me in our mustard flower field of God—
one day you will be brave enough to carry the sky

on your head. To burn like the stars that ignore
the sun, and shine anyway. I see her twinkle at me
from her place above the setting sun. I thought
you weren't coming, I say to her. She twinkles.

Aaron Dodd

Pools II

Acrylic
24x36"



David Perry

Blue

I've seen a person laugh to breathlessness,
his face blazing, swollen with blood,
glowing like a Cabbage Patch devil.

I remember thinking
that he might die like this,
with tinsel streamers of steaming red
screaming from every pore, and a blinding white
light beaming from his eyes.

It began with a plastic smile,
and all we remembered was the television,
digital rain,
in dead brainless black and white,
acid rain, not yet drained from us,
and a color we'd never seen before.

We named it *blue*.

Kyle Keller

Intact

I envy the coyote in the cold blue
night, rife with burs and ticks.
Another new trot across the meadow
as my moon waltzes coyly with clouds,
to the music of wind.
Past each passing huff of breath,
the whiff of the rabbit beckons.
Imagine the blood
matting the fur about my scruff,
beneath the panting smile
of a fed soul.



Lifan Fan

Dragonfruit

Colored Pencil on Paper

22x42"

Piper Rowley

She

We don't talk about her like that. Past tense, or otherwise.

Unless we've been drinking.

She gets drunk off two glasses of wine.

I hold her hair, rub her back while she buries her face in my chest.

My lips around her penis, she moans in ecstasy, and then breaks into tears. She pushes my head away,

and weeps into her hands.

I don't know what to feel. I don't know what I am.

I know what you are. Her cries quiet.

She grew up with pickup trucks and football.

Her grandpa's name.

He had been a sweet man, gentle, with clear blue eyes,

until the day she told him his name didn't match who she was inside,

and he broke the skin on her face with the knuckles of his closed fist.

His old blue eyes bright and cracked,

I'm not your home anymore.

I grew up with a single mom and magazines,

How to Get Your Best Figure Yet,

Please Him in Bed,

that's what people say.

I hold her tight in bed.

Sometimes she steals my boxers, rolls the waist-

band up to fit,
does her hair in the mirror.
I can see the angry sadness in her eyes.
I go up behind her, kiss her neck to make her
shiver, make her smile,
if she feels safe
I slide my hands into her pants,
hear her breath catch
feel her get hard.
We stumble back to the bed and make love.
Some mornings it takes us hours to get ready.
I want her to feel beautiful.

Going out, we feel the stares.
Head turning, lingering, hard-edged glaring eyes.
They look at us like we are an obscene puzzle.
Their eyes are hateful daggers piercing our flesh,
fish-hooks pulling at our skin.
I put my arm around her broad shoulders,
you look lovely again today.
We take our food to go.

Her head is resting on my shoulder, her hair is
vanilla scented.
The TV illuminates our faces,
a movie we've seen a dozen times already.
I hear her sniffing, feel a soft tremor quivering
down her spine.
I turn her eyes towards me,
why are you crying?
She inhales, shaking, her voice is wet,
it's okay if you leave me for a real girl,
want a real girl.
I hold her while she shudders, becoming violent-

ly breathless.
My hands frame her rounded face,
her tear-stained eyes break my heart,
I am enveloped in her vanilla scent.
You are a real girl.

For her birthday I get her a silver bracelet.
She has no jewelry of her own.
I pick something modest, elegant,
beautiful like you,
I say when she opens the box.
They were the first tears of happiness I had seen
in a long, long time.
My mother made her a cake sprinkled with
crushed almonds.
Her family,
like they are every other day of the year,
were silent.
Later that night in the darkness of our bedroom,
with her cold bare feet pressed against my warm
ribcage
I can hear her soft smile through the dark.
This was the best birthday I have ever had.
You said that last year.
She wraps her arm around my chest,
every birthday I spend with you is the best.
She kisses me on the lips and falls asleep.

She sits on the edge of the tub,
her long damp hair falling over her shoulder.
I watch this ritual the way some people pray.
We share razors,
men's are better than women's, she says.
I watch the way she pulls the blades across the

curve of her legs,
she is a painter with a brush.
Her face is still, calm, peaceful.
She glances up,
why do you always watch me?
I smile, go to her, on folded knees I kiss her soft
smooth legs, her calves, her thighs,
because I can never look away.

You are an abomination, one woman says.
A sin against God, humanity and nature, an older
man screams.
Hey sweetheart, let me suck on it, you fucking
fag, a drunk guy shouts.
Some weeks she refuses to leave the house.

She makes the bed in the morning. Her side is
neat and crisp without a single wrinkle.
She leaves my side carefully undone, because she
knows I don't like climbing into a made bed at
night,
she laughs, you say it is like getting in a coffin, a
stranger's bed, so I make my side, I leave yours.
She buys me the deodorant I like, and my favor-
ite soda when I've had a long day at work.
She is learning to cook.
She home-cooks a big spaghetti dinner, the only
thing she knows how to make, when we are cel-
ebrating.
I've come to love the texture of the slightly over-
cooked noodles.

She's not a screamer.
Not a talker.

When she is upset, if she is angry, she disappears
inside of herself. She is gone.
Pensive, silent, absent.
I get so frustrated.
I learned from my mother,
to complain, to say,
I don't like it, it makes me feel
you hurt me.
She does not speak.
I think she learned from a young age, how to fold
herself away.
An inverted origami piece.
She exiles herself into isolation,
to the island of our couch.
She avoids my eyes.
I've found her in the shower,
after hours of sitting there,
her hair is dry, her skin is dry, she is sitting in the
corner, staring at the floor.
My voice gets rough with desperate emotion,
what is it, just tell me.
Just talk.
But I know how she is. I know this is how she
deals with life.
So I climb into the shower with her,
and I wait.

Her eyes are squeezed tightly shut,
the pain on her face hurts me.
They were so mean...even when I tried...
Her sentences are fragmented by hiccups.
They're still so mean.
All I can say is,
I know baby.

I can't kiss away her bruises,
I can't erase the faces she sees.

The first time was slow. She was scared.
I was sure.
Are you sure, are you sure, she had asked.
It had been months.
Months of timid, shaky kisses, her lips nervously
knocking into mine.
It was months before my hand traveled to her
breasts and cupped them,
stroked them while she moaned inside my mouth,
then wrapped her fingers around my wrists,
are you sure?
Only if you are.
She hesitated, so I took my hand away,
kissed her cheek, my fingers in her hair.
When you're ready.
Five months later it was Christmas Eve,
and she stayed over.
My hands were pulling down her underwear,
wait, wait,
are you sure, you know, you know I'm not, I
don't, I have,
I stopped.
Put my hand on her cheek,
I am sure.
We looked at each other for a long time,
blinking Christmas tree lights reflecting in her
eyes,
and then she nodded, ever so slightly.
That night, we unwrapped each other like pres-
ents under the tree,
our fingertips shaking and roaming,

skating across flesh, touching, petting, stroking.
Our voices, is this okay, does this feel good,
became frantic pants,
the Christmas tree lights blinking against the dull
sheen of sweat on our bare skin.
We fell asleep naked, her head in the crook of
my arm,
my leg over hers.

She is inside, putting groceries away.
Mother and I are pulling the last few bags out of
the car.
She takes care of you, you know, my mother says.
I know, I say.
Did you know, right away, that she...her voice
trails off.
I nod.
It must be so hard, she says softly to herself.
It doesn't make a difference, she says.
She really is something special.
She is, I say.



Jacob DeHart

Sprawl

Mixed Media

11x9"

Sarah Turmail

With Love, Steve

Make sure the envelope matches the card,
my dad sighs with a guttural cough,
meaning he is in the barn, his flip phone pressed
to his ear, hands on some chipping gate
or an eighty gallon water trough. On my mother's
birthday, like a head butler, I am sent
to the dollar store with a twenty pulled from wadded
bills that live in an overall front pocket.
I am to scour for the most endearing calligraphy
with processed pinks, titled *To My Wife*,
something I do not have. I drive in with
the consolation prize of McDonald's won
with the change, thinking of stale dollar store air,
and stale McChickens, ranch only. I look
for some last minute love, printed and sold
for a dollar and some change, matching envelope
included. And sometimes I even sign it for him,
with my block letters of my botched generation,
clearly an imposter of his quick, dark slashes
of historic cursive made always with ink,
shaming the water color of my pencil.
Go ahead and sign it, I got a cow having trouble
calving. And so I wipe the French fry shine
from my left hand, but the drag of my wrist against
the written lead leaves smears that can't say how
much he wanted that dollar and a half card to tell
her everything he wished he felt in his powder heart.

Kyle Keller

Yeah, No. Nothing Serious

When it rains cold in autumn,
to rehearse the warmth of her senses,
the girl presses lip
prints to the pane
of a window's fog,
& unflinchingly intimate,

Nods off Beat
to the pulsing jazz
of her heart.
In a light sleep, she stirs
& dreams once more of restless
folk-strings
on a worn stage, in orange
-aura, outdoor summer symphonies,
amid the hazy evening hum
from hidden swarms of cicadas.

As she sleeps, my name will run
to the screen
of her phone, send a buzz-buzz
down her leg & in a bubble,
as though I'm speaking,
will read: Listen tho,
I had no intention of being
so enchanted. Please,
squeeze me to the marrow,
til the cages of my bones
close.

Sarah Turmail

The Lesser of Appalachia

When you're here in sugar-water Dixie, the flattop strips of new wheat sway in the sand like planted chorus lines. They hum the Southern battle cry with the cicadas, while closing screen doors keep the rhythm steadied.

On a front porch, red-faced farmers gnaw their after-supper pipes. The stories of lost souls who bend and weep like heavy willows are fed with the dessert pie to their grandkids, garnished with secondhand smoke.

The burnouts eternalized by the farmers' parables are found digging for cigarette butts in the gutters. They rattle their loose brains in coffee can skulls, scrape horseshoes against the wooden street markers.

The poor men can hear the dying snap of a mouse, caught in the stove trap of a skinny hilljack. He itches his ass with bony fingers, sips soup from a barbed mug that goes unwashed until the next rain. In the morning,

grubby beater-lickers will pitter and pat the clotted Black Dirt into baby foothills. They will grind the sandy grains between their teeth as they sit with chubby knuckles wedged between clammy, raw thighs.

They will wait for their life to be validated by a tractor ride on the tire guard, to mind a beer cooler underfoot, to watch the soft soil sift and separate through the blades.

Claire Christoff

The Day After He Dumped You

The day after he dumped you,
let's-just-take-a-break-style
you saw a dead bird on the sidewalk
and took a picture of it
and sent it to him
and he didn't reply
but what did you expect

like the dead robin you saw
outside the library
before it really got cold,
sort of an avian miscarriage or maybe
abortion, sinewy
and sad and kind of like chewed gum,
bird bacon

and the snow that fell on your head
under the singing orange streetlamp,
rivulets of broken yolk through your hair.
Except it wasn't snow,
it dried hard and purple
and you used an entire bottle of Pantene
to make you feel civilized again.

Aaron Dodd
Pools III
Acrylic
24x36"



Kalia Dimitrova

Neruda's Roselets

In your palms
I dissolve,
you want me tender,
I am seawater
disappearing in your warmth.

You want me sweet and light
I am torta caprese,
you go back to
in that corner café
in Capri
where you write me
in hot evenings
when I wait
to be born
over and over.

I am clay
curved
by your grip
accordingly,
I am laughter
sung
by your throat,
I am a rose
stripped by you.

can I be something more?

I die in every line
you give life to
I sleep in this
nameless house
anonymous
as a southern wind,
a secret you keep
away from the streets
that greet you.

I am the sweat
on your face
when she asks
if you love another.
I am the bittersweet
espresso staining
your lying mouth.
you wash me away
when needed.

but what do I know of this world?

my soul,
my brain,
my words,
no one knows.
I am a rose,
roselet,
tiny and naked,
for you.

Kali Harrison

Far Below

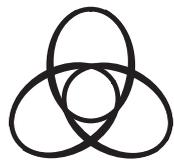
His four-post, antique bed engulfs the bedroom
with giant, oaken frame.
Freshly laundered linens lace the air, perfumes
of lavender and jasmine.

Far below, the corner of 28th and Jackson bustles.
John, the hotdog man, gleams behind the red canopy of his cart.
Numb toes tempted by guilt over stony, building's ledge.
My graceful descent in chaotic remorse.

Awaken, fumbling puddles of warm, Egyptian cotton.
The alarm blares like the horn of a downtown taxi-driver howling.
Humble rays peek behind creamy, sheer drapes. Morning
greet me with the agonizing comfort of a lustful stranger's bed.

**Read
deeply.**

**Write
honestly.**



Contributors

Kelsey Blacklock is a painter interested in the heightened awareness of nighttime, the struggle of the working poor, and the buzz of neon lights.

Carolina Castoreno is a Senior at IUPUI whose genre of choice has been Creative Nonfiction. But she has recently rediscovered her love of poetry and the freedom it affords her to make her voice and passion for culture and social justice reach more people.

Claire Christoff is a junior studying English with a concentration in creative writing. In her spare time, she enjoys loitering in the vitamin aisle at Whole Foods and pretending she lives in a Nancy Meyers movie.

Jacob DeHart - City expansion can suck for trees.

Kalia Dimitrova is a graduate student in Europe, a traveler and an explorer of cultures and places. She's always equipped with a pen, using writing to document the experiences. This poem is a testimonial of a semester spent as an exchange student at IUPUI.

Aaron Dodd is a local artist and Herron student raised in Zionsville, IN. He's only recently discovered the value in non-representational artwork, but enjoys its expressive merit very much.

Lifan Fan is a student at the Herron School of Art and Design studying Painting. She likes drawing and painting surrealistic scenes with animals and mythical creatures.

Kali Harrison is a Creative Writing English major. Writing is an enlightening and therapeutic experience for her. Poetry is one of her favorite forms of creative expression. The empty page is a safe space for her to learn about herself and her abilities as a scholar and as a human being.

Kyle Keller - There is nothing sexier than walking on escalators. Remember that.

Carie McMichael is a writer of several different genres, on topics ranging from Russian ballet dancers to gummi bears. She aspires to write a novel that will outsell E.L. James, both to achieve a desired level of success and to restore the status quo.

Laila Naseeb - "AnGel" was a study on the male back with gel pens, typically used by twelve year olds, on black stock paper.

David Perry is soon to be an IUPUI alumni, and spent the past semester at CSUN in Los Angeles under the National Student Exchange Program, studying writing and animation. He volunteered at this year's CTN eXpo and attended the World Animation Celebration.

Piper Rowley is a sophomore at Herron, studying Drawing and Illustration, Creative Writing, and Art History.

Mercedez Schaefer is a graduate student in English at IUPUI. Her research focuses on multicultural women's literature, but she often writes creatively as well. She received her BA from Ohio State University and plans on pursuing a PhD in Literature. Her life dream is to own a café bookstore and write fiction.

Sarah Turmail was born and raised in a community where nothing but the car models and brand of jeans changes throughout the generations. She has been writing for several years as a way to sort through everything the highwater has warped. She is an English major with a concentration in creative writing, meaning she's pursuing a degree in turning her circumstance into art. "Lucy I'm Home" - Coming up from the river bottoms, one sees the dirty before the clean, the bottom before the top. It is naturally lower there, where the suntanned water sucks at its own mouth, and so I have witnessed the grit before the glory. This is the retelling. "A Butcher..." - I have never written a eulogy, but I have written an elegy. This poem is dedicated in proud remembrance to all who have been open about their identity, but shot down by their loved ones for it. "With Love, Steve" - I submit this with all the love an old farmer stuck in his ways can muster. It is always better written, rather than said, Amen. "The Lesser of Appalachia" - This poem is my views, my first impression of the world and of humans. This is the mold I never fit, but loved so dearly nonetheless. Be careful with this one; it is the tender place beneath my ribs.

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students and faculty,
family and friends,
and you too, reader.

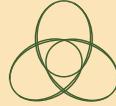
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your time, however little or much.

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genesis – the origin or coming into being of something;
development into being, especially by growth or evolution;
the process or mode of origin <the ~ of a book>

genesis



featuring

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Carolina Castoreno

Claire Christoff

Jacob DeHart

Kalia Dimitrova

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Lifan Fan

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